

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A method for assaying potency and stability of a virus comprising the steps of:

- a) contacting a plurality of cells susceptible to caspase 3 induction with said virus; and
- b) measuring caspase 3 activity as an indication of viral stability.

Claim 2 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein said caspase 3 activity is measured using a caspase 3 substrate linked to a fluorimetric or a colorimetric moiety.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method of claim 2, wherein said substrate is the peptide Asp-Glu-Val-Asp (SEQ ID NO: 1).

Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 3, wherein said virus is either measles virus, mumps virus, or rubella virus.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 4, wherein said plurality of cells is either Vero cells or RK-13 cells.

Claim 6 (original): The method of claim 3, wherein prior to said step (a) said virus was lyophilized.

Claim 7 (original): The method of claim 3, wherein said step (a) and said step (b) are performed at two or more time intervals.

Claim 8 (original): The method of claim 3, wherein after said step (a) and prior to said step (b) said cells were frozen and then thawed.

Claim 9 (withdrawn): A method of identifying a stabilizing formulation comprising the steps of:

a) infecting a first plurality of cells with said virus stored in a first test formulation, and contacting a second plurality of cells with said virus stored in a second test formulation, wherein said first and second plurality of cells are the same strain and are susceptible to caspase 3 induction; and

b) measuring caspase 3 activity produced from said virus stored in said first and said second test formulation to identify said stabilizing formulation.

Claim 10 (withdrawn): The method of claim 9, wherein said step (a) further comprises contacting a third plurality of cells with said virus stored in a third test formulation, and contacting a fourth plurality of cells with said virus stored in a fourth test formulation, wherein said third and fourth plurality of cells are the same strain as said first and second plurality of cells.

Claim 11 (withdrawn): The method of claim 10, wherein said caspase 3 activity is measured using a caspase 3 substrate linked to a fluorimetric or a colorimetric moiety.

Claim 12 (withdrawn-currently amended): The method of claim 11, wherein said substrate is the peptide Asp-Glu-Val-Asp (SEQ ID NO: 1).

Claim 13 (withdrawn): The method of claim 12, wherein said virus is either measles virus, mumps virus, or rubella virus.

Claim 14 (withdrawn): The method of claim 13, wherein said first, said second, said third, and said fourth plurality of cells is either Vero cells or RK-13 cells.

Claim 15 (withdrawn): The method of claim 12, wherein said virus stored in said first formulation, said second formulation, said third formulation and said fourth formulation was lyophilized.

Claim 16 (withdrawn): The method of claim 12, wherein said step (a) and said step (b) are performed at two or more time intervals.

Claim 17 (withdrawn): The method of claim 16, wherein after said step (a) and prior to said step (b) at least one of said first, said second, said third, or said fourth plurality of cells are frozen and thawed.